

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, RP
SUBJ: ENRILE REBUTS AQUINO

REF: MANILA 3618, MANILA 3940

SUMMARY

1. DETAINED EX-SENATOR BENIGNO AQUINO'S TWO RECENT MEDIA EVENTS, HIS MARCH 10 "FACE THE NATION" TV INTERVIEW AND HIS MARCH 11 PRESS CONFERENCE, PROMPTED SWIFT REBUTTAL FROM DEFENSE SECRETARY JUAN PONCE ENRILE, ENRILE SENT AQUINO TWO LETTERS, WITH COPIES TO THE PRESS, SEEKING TO REFUTE AQUINO'S CLAIM THAT HE WORKED, RATHER THAN FOR THE CIA, THAT HE NEVER BELONGED TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY, AND THAT HE IS INNOCENT OF SUBVERSION AND MURDER CHARGES, END SUMMARY

2. THE FIRST ENRILE LETTER, EIGHT PAGES IN LENGTH, WAS REPRODUCED IN THE MANILA DAILIES MARCH 11 JUXTAPOSED WITH COVERAGE OF AQUINO'S TV INTERVIEW. THE LETTER CITES DOCUMENTS ALLEGEDLY SHOWING THAT AS EARLY AS 1967 AQUINO WAS CLAIMING TO BE A CIA AGENT. ENRILE'S LETTER STATES, HOWEVER, THAT "ALTHOUGH AQUINO OFFERED TO BECOME A CIA AGENT, HE WAS REJECTED..." IT ALLEGES THAT IN RESPONSE TO A 1967 INQUIRY INITIATED BY RAFAEL M. SALES, THEN EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, "THE CIA
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STATION CHIEF IN MANILA" REVEALED THAT AQUINO HAD ATTEMPT-
ED TO JOIN THE CIA BUT THAT HIS REQUEST WAS DENIED BECAUSE
HE WAS "CLASSIFIED AS UNSUITABLE FOR ANTI-COMMUNIST WORK."

3. THE ENRILE LETTER DISPUTES AQUINO'S CONTENTION THAT
HIS CONVICTION FOR ALLEGEDLY ORDERING THE MURDER OF BARRIO CAPTAIN
SUMAT WAS BASED ON THE TESTIMONY OF A SINGLE WITNESS.

SIMILARLY, IT DISPUTES AQUINO'S CLAIM THAT THE SUBVERSION CHARGES AGAINST HIM WERE BASED ON THE TESTIMONY ONLY OF PROFESSIONAL ANTI-COMMUNIST SIMEON DEL ROSARIO. ENRILE ARGUED THAT THIS WOULD CERTAINLY SHOCK THE MILIARY, BECAUSE THEY HAD PATIENTLY PRESENTED A GREAT NUMBER OF WITNESSES TO ACTUAL SUBVERSIVE ACTS COMMITTED BY AQUINO. ON AQUINO'S DENIAL OF COMMUIST PARTY MEMBERSHIP, ENRILE NOTED THAT "YOU MAY NOT HAVE BEEN FORMALLY LISTED AS A MEMBER BUT YOU CERTAINLY WERE ACTIVE IN ITS LEADERSHIP."

4. ENRILE REACTED DEFENSIVELY TO AN OFF HAND REMARK MADE BY AQUINO DURING HIS INTERVIEW THAT HE (ENRILE) WAS ONE OF THE LAWYERS INVOLVED IN THE SALE OF THE AQUINO-COJUANGCO ESTATE, HACIENDA LUISITA. ENRILE SAID HE MAY HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LAW FIRM WHICH HANDLED THE SALE OR HAVE BEEN REFERRED SOME PAPERS ON TAXATION, BUT NEVER HANDLED THE TRANSACTION ACTIVELY.

5. ENRILE'S SECOND LETTER TO AQUINO APPEARED IN THE MARCH 12 MANILA DAILIES ALONGSIDE ACCOUNTS OF AQUINO'S FORT BONIFACIO PRESS CONFEJENCE. FULL TEXT OF LETTER FOLLOWS: BEGIN QUOTE "I AM CONSTINED TO WRITE YOU ANOTHER NOTE BECAUSE OF THE CLAIMS YOU MADE IN YOUR TELEVISION INTERVIEW LAST NIGHT. IT IS NOW QUITE OBVIOUS THAT WHILE YOU WERE WORKING WITH THE CIA, YOU ACTUALLY WERE HAPPY TO BE USED BY THAT AGENCY FOR ITS PURPOSES, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVEN IF IT REFUSED TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH YOU BY REJECTING YOUR OFFER TO TRAIN AND WORK WITH THE CIA. IT IS ALSO QUITE OBVIOUS THAT YOU NOT ONLY RENDERED SERVICE TO A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT WHICH COULD BE CLASSIFIED UNDER THE NATURE OF ESPIONAGE, THAT YOU ACTUALLY WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO OFFER INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION TO THAT FOREIGN GOVERNMENT. YOU LIKEWISE CLAIM YOU WERE AUTHORIZED BY THE LATE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MAURO MENDEZ AND THE LATE PRESIDENTS RAMON MAGSAYSAY AND CARLOS P. GARCIA TO UNDERTAKE TRAINING WITH THE CIA AND PARTICIPATE IN COVERING OPERATIONS WITH THE CIA. RECORDS OF THE GOVERNMENT INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES HAVE ESTABLISHED THAT THESE CLAIMS OF YOURS ARE UNTRUE. I WILL SEND YOU DOCUMENTS WHICH SHOW UP YOUR TRANSPARENT EFFORTS TO ESCAPE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTS BY INVOLVING THE NAMES OF DECEASED HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, WHICH TO SAY THE LEAST IS UNFAIR TO THE DEPARTED HEADS OF STATE. MAY I REITERATE MY PREVIOUS OFFER TO SEEK AUTHORITY TO DECLASSIFY DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO MATTERS THAT ARE NOW OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO YOU AND TO PLACE THEM AT YOUR DISPOSAL. END QUOTE.

NEWSOM

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